

March Madness: Underdog teams upset higher-ranked teams, cause bracket-busters

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KANSAS JAYHAWKS — ROCK CHOKE (AGAIN)

For the fourth time in the last five seasons, Kansas basketball fell out of the NCAA Tournament to a lower seeded team. The Jayhawks were picked by some to reach the Elite Eight, possibly even the Final Four. After coming back in the second half to put away Western Kentucky in the first round, No. 2 seed KU faced No. 10 seed Stanford in the second round and promptly ended its season in maddening frustration. Without star **Joel Embiid**, KU lost a large chunk of its inside game. After **Tarik Black** fouled out with 5:25 left, the Jayhawks frontcourt was rudderless against Stanford's stiff zone defense. It didn't help that KU shot only 33 percent from the field, and regular-season leading scorer **Andrew Wiggins** scored a laughable four points. After coming back to tie the game at 49 with 5:10 left, the Jayhawks went almost four minutes without a field goal, and Stanford hit clutch free throws to put the game on ice with 30 seconds left, leading 58-51. Then, **Conner Frankamp** came off the bench and nearly saved the day for KU, hitting back-to-back threes in 15 seconds to give KU a fighting chance. Frankamp had a shot at the buzzer to tie, but **Mario Chalmers'** magic was no where to be found this time, and Stanford emerged 60-57.

MISSOURI TIGERS — BRUSHED ASIDE

For most Missouri Tiger fans, the ending to this season couldn't come soon enough. Missouri finished sixth place in a weak SEC

and missed out on the NCAA Tournament. After sneaking by Davidson in the first round of the NIT, Southern Miss mercifully stopped the bleeding, knocking off Mizzou 71-63 in the second round. Missouri's lackadaisical effort allowed Southern Miss to dictate pace, and Mizzou trailed for most of the game, attempting to come back on several different occasions. Each time, poor defense and decision-making let Mizzou down, and Southern Miss capitalized on the mistakes. On three separate occasions in the second half, Mizzou made a big run to close the gap, and each time, Southern Miss responded by brushing the Tigers aside and going on a run of their own. Southern Miss nailed five of six free throws in the final minute to seal the deal. For Mizzou and its fans, it's on to football season.

KANSAS STATE WILDCATS — FROSH PIT

The No. 8 vs. No. 9 seed matchup is theoretically the most evenly-matched game in the opening round of the NCAA tournament, but for Kansas State University, the game could not have been a bigger mismatch. The Wildcats were thrown up against Kentucky and its starting lineup of five freshmen, all McDonald's All-Americans. Kentucky had three starters taller than **Thomas Gipson**, KSU's tallest player: **Julius Randle** at 6'9, **Dakari Johnson** and **Willie Cauley Stein** at 7'0. Instead of a fast-paced, scoring-oriented match, this one was a polar opposite. Right away, it was clear the game was going to be slow and ugly — the two teams combined for 23 points in the first 10 minutes. KSU struggled against Kentucky's frontcourt and picked a very bad game

to shoot only 36 percent from the field. Kentucky slowly pushed KSU away, steadily building a lead that peaked at 13 with just under one minute remaining. **Will Spradling** and **Marcus Foster** hit back to back threes, but the comeback attempt was far too little far too late, and KSU was sent home, 56-49.

MERCER vs. DUKE

A quick look at Bracketology said this Bears team was the biggest bracket-buster. An experience but overlooked No. 14 seed, Mercer stunned No. 3 seed Duke, 78-71, behind 20 points.

HARVARD vs. CINNCINNATI

The No. 12 seed Harvard was finally ready to end the "smart guys" label by fans and media and get down to some winning. The Crimson upset No. 5 seed Cincinnati, the second NCAA Tournament win in Harvard's entire history.

DAYTON FLYERS

Say hello to the NCAA Cinderella run of 2014. Dayton, as No. 11 seed, is bound for the Elite 8. The Flyers squeaked by Ohio State on a game-winner from **Vee Sanford**, held on for dear life to stun No. 3 seed Syracuse, and handled No. 10 seed Stanford in the Sweet Sixteen by 10 points to reach the Flyers first Elite Eight in 30 years.